



Commander's "September 11th" Message
25th Infantry Division, Schofield Barracks, HI

Tropic Lightning Team,

Seven years ago today the United States of America was attacked, setting into motion a series of events that have led us to where we are today. Let us take some time to reflect on that day and remember those who were taken away from us too soon. We are a nation at war, and the warriors of the 25th Infantry Division stand prepared to defeat America's enemies.

Our enemy is terrorism, and the people who commit acts of terrorism. Al-Qaeda, the preeminent terrorist organization in the world today, has four stated goals. These goals are to drive Americans and American influence out of all Muslim nations, especially Saudi Arabia; destroy Israel; topple pro-Western dictatorships around the Middle East; and lastly, to unite all Muslims and establish, by force if necessary, an Islamic nation adhering to the rule of the first Caliphs.

This is not something that we can, nor will we, allow to happen. As the most powerful nation on earth, as the best trained and equipped fighting force on earth, it is not only our duty, but our privilege to protect America and her allies, and preserve freedom.

In the month's following September 11, 2001, President Bush proclaimed through a joint resolution, and approved by Congress, that September 11 of every year would forever be designated as "Patriot Day".

Patriot Day is a day for our Nation to pay tribute to the courageous men and women in uniform serving around the world and the devoted members of our law enforcement, public safety, and intelligence communities at home who work night and day to protect us from harm and preserve the freedom of this great Nation. On this day flags will be flown at half-staff as we remember and honor the innocent Americans and people from around the world who lost their lives as a result of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001.

As we reflect on the events of September 11, 2001, we can never forget the heroic actions of everyday citizens as they rose to the challenge, uniting and displaying extraordinary acts of courage and bravery. These citizens were the first soldiers in the war we are now engaged in. They are the true patriots that we honor and defend everyday.

I ask that all Tropic Lightning Soldiers observe a moment of silence this morning, and while doing so remember the words that our Commander in Chief spoke so many years ago, "The battle is now joined on many fronts. We will not waver; we will not tire; we will not falter; and we will not fail. Peace and freedom will prevail."

Tropic Lightning!

ROBERT L. CASLEN, Jr.
Major General, US Army
Commanding